

March 25, 2009

Dear Members of the Committee,

As professors involved in training masters level counselors at Montana State University's CACREP-accredited counseling programs, we do not support SB235 / LC 1889. We intimately familiar with the kinds of training in psychological assessment and evaluation that our masters level students receive. The one course they do received on assessments is a survey course designed to familiarize with types of psychological measures and assessments that are being used so that they can communicate with psychologists and psychiatrists. The course does not teach them to evaluate or assess individuals. Nor does it prepare them to integrate or interpret the data from psychological tests and measures that is necessary to provide a complete psychological assessment.

For counselors to be trained in assessment they would need considerable additional training, including coursework and supervision. At minimum we would see this as requiring separate courses in intelligence testing, objective personality testing, and projective personality testing, as well as an assessment practicum.

However, we do recognize that there are some relatively simple and straight-forward self-report psychological tests and measures that counselors could easily learn to administer and score. Some examples of this are the Meyers-Briggs Type Inventory, the Beck Depression Inventory, and the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory. We would not be in favor of barring licensed counselors from employing these kinds of measures in their clinical practice.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,



John Christopher, Ph.D.
Professor of Counselor Education & Mental Health Counseling Program Leader

Adina Smith, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Counselor Education
Health & Human Development Clinic Director